



Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Date: Monday, July 28, 2014
Time: 4:30 p.m.
Place: McCourt Social Hall, Memorial Town Hall, Spencer, MA
Present: Chairman Pepe, Vice Chair Fritze, Clerk G. Woodbury, Members Stevens & C. Woodbury and Administrator Gaudette.

At 4:30 p.m. Chairman Pepe called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

FY15 Budget Discussion

Revised SEBRSD Budget and Assessment

Administrator Gaudette reported that additional transportation aid was included in the Governor's final budget, which allowed the SEBRSC to reduce the District budget, resulting in a lower assessment and preventing the need for a Proposition 2 ½ Override. He recommends moving forward with a Special Town Meeting for the sole purpose of adopting the District's budget with the revised number. Town Services restoration can be decided at a later date.

Revised Spencer FY15 Proforma

Mr. Gaudette presented the revised budget which now reflects a balanced budget with the reduction in the SEBRSD assesment.

Town Administrator Recommendations for FY15 Budget Timeline

The timeline of events leading up to the FY15 SEBRSD Budget adoption and a draft calendar for the FY15 Town Budget restoring municipal services was reviewed. The STM will be held on August 21st to vote on the revised SEBRSD budget.

Action Item: Open and Close Warrant for Special Town Meeting to Adopt SEBRSD Assessment

A motion to open the Special Town Meeting Warrant to adopt the SEBRSD Assessment (G. Woodbury/C. Woodbury) passed 5/0.

A motion to close the Special Town Meeting Warrant to adopt the SEBRSD Assessment (G. Woodbury/Fritze) passed 5/0.

Mr. Stevens commended the School Committee for their good faith efforts in improving relationships between the District and the Town. Mr. Pepe noted they have made difficult decisions and the Board appreciates all they've done.

Discussion: Ballot Questions for Special Election to Restore Municipal Services

Mr. Gaudette advised the Board that a Special Election cannot be scheduled until a Ballot Question to restore services is set. After the FY14 audit is complete and values are certified by DOR, the amount of available funds will be known prior to the fall Annual Town Meeting. There is a 45 day requirement from the date the Town Clerk is notified until the date an election can be held.

G. Woodbury noted after last week's discussion, the consensus of the Board was to have one amount, with no separation of services. Mr. Stevens recalled there were strong feelings to put forth as one question, although the Board agreed to obtain input from voters first. He is not in favor of the \$484,000 and wants to see individual questions to provide voters with a say as to what's important to them. He acknowledged reductions went too far with the library. Mr. Pepe is in favor of bringing back all services, however wants to reduce the \$484,000, if possible.

A motion to set the Override amount at \$484,000 to bring back Town services (Fritze/C. Woodbury) passed by roll call vote (3/2): Fritze yes; C. Woodbury yes; G. Woodbury yea; Stevens nay; Pepe nay.

Mr. Stevens said he would like to hear from departments that have taken the brunt of the cutbacks to find out what they've learned and/or if they found a way to deploy people differently, or in the case of Town Hall, what would happen if only part of the day was brought back. Mr. Gaudette said the Town will provide services with whatever funds are available; with partial funding, certain services will not be available. Mr. C. Woodbury questioned the stipends for volunteer boards and committees. Mr. Gaudette said it's difficult to get volunteers and doesn't recommend discontinuing stipends.

Selectmen C. Woodbury wants to see the Ballot Question for services to remain as one question. Mr. Stevens and Mr. Pepe would like voters to have a choice to on for the service that's important to them.

Comments from the public

- Al Shedyak would like to see the Question separated to provide voters with the option to decide.
- Mary Williams does not agree with separating, and noted people may not even realize certain services are missing, for example with Town Hall not operating on a full schedule.
- Mary Braney believes it should be a single Question and advised the Board that as leaders, they have the big picture; sometimes those you are leading may not agree with you and may not understand the impact in all areas.
- John Desmaris said he's heard from a lot of people and they are missing these services. He strongly agrees with a single Question, noting not everyone is aware of what goes on behind the scenes.

A motion to have the Ballot Question as one dollar amount and one question (G. Woodbury/Fritze) passed 3/2.

Town Clerk, Laura Torti informed the Board that it's possible to put a Town question on the November 4th State Election Ballot. After discussion, the board agreed to place the Town Override Question on the State Ballot. It will eliminate the expense of having two elections and offer the added benefit of extended hours required by the State.

A motion to set the Special Election date for November 4, 2014 as discussed (G. Woodbury/C. Woodbury) passed 5/0.

Mr. Pepe noted an RFP for the Sugden Block is in the works. The Board will review at the August 18th meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 pm. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Savoie
Administrative Assistant

Referenced Materials

Revised SEBRSD Budget

Revised Town FY15 Proforma

Special Town Meeting Warrant

Ballot Questions to Restore Municipal Services